

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-20 CPR-02 SY-05 FBIE-00 JUSE-00 /098 W
-----044004 261428Z /43

R 261007Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7670
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS MANILA 10719

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, PDIP, RP
SUBJECT: NEW YORK INCIDENT: WEEKEND MEDIA TREATMENT

REF: MANILA 10523

1. SUMMARY: WEEKEND NEWS STORIES ON THE NEW YORK INCIDENT'S AFTERMATH INCLUDED REPORTS ON SMALL DEMONSTRATIONS OUTSIDE THE US EMBASSY AND CLARK AIR BASE AND FONMIN ROMULO'S RENEWED REQUEST FOR US APOLOGY ON JUNE 24 TV SHOW. COLUMNIST BIGORNIA URGED ROMULO TO STOP QUIBBLING OVER SEMANTICS AND GET ON TO MORE IMPORTANT BILATERAL ISSUES "TIMES JOURNAL" CONTINUED TO INSIST EDITORIAL-
LY THAT THE USG "GIVE FULL SATISFACTION." END SUMMARY.

2. THERE WAS MODERATE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE JUNE 11 NEW YORK INCIDENT OVER THE JUNE 24-25 WEEKEND. "BULLETIN TODAY" AND "TIMES JOURNAL" JUNE 25 RAN FRONT-PAGE PHOTOS AND BRIEF STORIES ON LUIS TARUC'S DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY OFFICE BUILDING JUNE 24 (MANILA 10645), AND "DAILY EXPRESS" AND "TIMES JOURNAL" JUNE 26 CARRIED SHORT INSIDE-PAGE REPORTS OF TARUC'S DEMONSTRATIONS OUTSIDE
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CLARK AIR BASE JUNE 25 (MANILA 10666). "EXPRESS" STORY CONCLUDED: "AMERICAN MILITARY POLICEMEN ASSIGNED AT THE MAIN GATE OF THE BASE WERE UNPERTURBED BY THE GATHERING AND THE SPEECHES. BUT THERE WAS AN UNUSUAL NUMBER OF FILIPINO AND AMERICAN GUARDS ASSIGNED AT THE GATE. SEVERAL AMERICAN SERVICEMEN, WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE NEW YORK INCIDENT, DISMISSED THE CASE AS 'ONE OF THOSE

THINGS."

3. INTERVIEWED ON TV'S "FACE THE NATION" JUNE 24, ROMULO TERMED NY POLICE "HOODLUMS" AND AGAIN INSISTED USG SHOULD EXTEND APOLOGY.

4. REFRESHINGLY, "BULLETIN TODAY" COLUMNIST BIGORNIA JUNE 25 ARGUED THAT "THERE ARE MORE PRESSING PROBLEMS AFFLICTING PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN RELATIONS THAN AN ISOLATED INCIDENT." BIGORNIA CITED REACHING AGREEMENT ON MILITARY BASES AND PROMOTING TRADE AS "MORE VITAL TO THE COUNTRY'S WELFARE THAN OBTAINING AN ABJECT APOLOGY." HE CONTINUED: "WHY QUIBBLE OVER SEMANTICS ANYWAY, OBSERVERS ASK. THIS WRITER AS WELL AS OTHERS SEE LITTLE, IF ANY, DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE 'APOLOGY' THE FOREIGN MINISTER DEMANDS AND THE 'REGRETS' THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS PROFFERED. THE DICTIONARY SAYS THE WORD REGRET MEANS: 'GRIEF, SORROW, REPINING, SELF-REPROACH, SELF-CONDEMNATION, REPENTANCE, PENITENCE.' SOMETIMES IT REFERS TO THAT EVENT OVER WHICH ONE HAS NO CONTROL, OR TO BE KEENLY SORRY FOR.' (SIC) ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WORD APOLOGY IMPLIES THAT ONE HAS BEEN AT LEAST APPARENTLY, IN THE WRONG. MOREOVER, AN APOLOGY INVOLVES HUMILIATION AND SELF-DEBASEMENT AND NO NATION EVER APOLOGIZES EXCEPT WHEN FORCED TO ITS KNEES TO APOLOGIZE. CERTAINLY, EVERY FILIPINO IS SORE WITH THE VIOLATION BY AMERICAN POLICE OFFICERS OF THE INVIOABILITY UNCLASSIFIED

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OF PHILIPPINE DIPLOMATIC PREMISES IN NEW YORK. SO WOULD THE AMERICANS BE SORE, HAD METRO MANILA POLICEMEN RAIDED THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY ON ROXAS BOULEVARD. BUT PHILIPPINE PIQUE AND ANGER SHOULD NOT IMPERIL ONGOING DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH COUNTRIES. AS FOR INJURIES INFLICTED ON THE PERSONS OF PHILIPPINE CENTER PERSONNEL AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY SUFFERED, THERE IS NO LACK OF AVENUES TO THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND FILIPINOS FOR REDRESS. EVEN IN NEW YORK."

5. MORE PREDICTABLY, "TIMES JOURNAL" JUNE 25 EDITORIALIZE THAT "THE RETICENT ATTITUDE OF THE AMERICANS CAN ONLY SUGGEST THAT, BEYOND CONVEYING REGRET, THEY DO NOT PROPOSE TO HELP THE AGGRIEVED GET JUSTICE NOR DO THEY GUARANTEE THAT THE INCIDENT WILL NOT BE REPEATED IN THE FUTURE. ... FOR THE GOOD OF RP-US RELATIONS, WASHINGTON SHOULD REASSESS THE SITUATION AND GIVE FULL SATISFACTION TO OUR GRIEVANCES." MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, SHOW OF FORCE, POLICE FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANILA10719
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780264-0924
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780620/aaaaaros.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f81aee7f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MANILA 10523
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2211116
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK INCIDENT: WEEKEND MEDIA TREATMENT
TAGS: SHUM, PDIP, ASEC, RP, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f81aee7f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014